

Message Text

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 01 NIAMEY 01225 231818Z

46

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SUBJECT: ADDITIONAL BIO ON NIGERIEN LEADERSHIP

REF: NIAMEY 1110, ABIDJAN DAO 164 APR 74 (NOTAL)

FOLLOWING ARE SOME PRELIMINARY THOUGHTS ON NEW NIGERIEN LEADERSHIP:

1. LT. COL. SEYNI KOUNTCHE IS PERSON CURRENTLY MAKING DECISIONS AND GIVING ORDERS (CONTRARY TO SOME NEWS REPORTS WHICH PLAY UP MAJOR SANI AS QUOTE STRONG MAN UNQUOTE). COLONEL KOUNTCHE IS INTORVERTED, CAUTIOUS AND REFLECTIVE. HE HAS REPUTATION AS MAN OF INTEGRITY AND HONESTY AND IS WIDELY REPSECTED BY HIS FELLOW OFFICERS. HIS PERSONAL LIFE HERETOFORE HAS BEEN DISCREET AND UNPRETENTIOUS. COL. KOUNTCHE SO FAR HAS SET TONE OF NEW GOVERNMENT WITH HIS CALM, REASONED PRONOUNCEMENTS, HIS EMPHASIS ON DISCIPLINE, ORDER AND AUSTERITY AND HIS DETERMINATION TO GIVE HIGHEST PRIORITY TO INTERNAL PROBLEMS OF WHICH DROUGHT RELIEF IS NUMBER ONE. COL KOUNTCHE HAS HANDLED QUESTIONS FOREIGN POLICY WELL SO FAR. HE IS HOWEVER PERSONALLY MORE INTERESTED IN DOMESTIC MATTERS AND GIVES IMPRESSION OF HOPING THAT BY CONTINUING PREVIOUS GOVERNMENT'S FOREIGN POLICY AND ELEGATING
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PAGE 02 NIAMEY 01225 231818Z

MANY ASPECTS TO MAJOR SANI AND FOREIGN MINISTER

MOUMOUNI DJERMAKOYE, HE WILL AVOID HAVING DEVOTE MUCH TIME TO FOREIGN AFFAIRS. (IT IS DOUBTFUL WHETHER KOUNTCHE'S HOPES WILL BE REALIZED SINCE NIGER'S RELATIONS WITH FRANCE ARE SO ENCOMPASSING AND THERE

CAN BE NO CONVENIENT SEPARATION OF NIGER'S COMESTIC AND FOREIGN POLICY VIS-A-VIS FRANCE).

2. MAJOR SANI SOUNA SIDO ON OTHER HAND IS IN MANY WAYS DIRECT OPPOSITE OF KOUNTCHE. THE MAJOR IS OUTGOING, SOMEWHAT SLAMBOYANT, FACILE IN SPEECH AND QUICK TO MAKE DECISIONS. (HE APPEARED AS HERO IN LOCALLY MADE ADVENTURE MOVIE SEVERAL YEARS AGO.) HE HAS A WIDE CIRCLE OF ACQUAINTANCES BOTH AMONG NIGERIENS AS WELL AS FOREIGN COMMUNITY. FOR YEARS HE WAS ASSOCIATED WITH MRS. DIORI IN SOME OF HER BUSINESS ENTERPRISES AND THERE IS MORE THAN A SUSPICION THAT HE PROFITED HANDSOMELY THEREBY. LOCAL OPINION ATTRIBUTES COL. KOUNTCHE WITH ONG HELD DETERMINATION TO OVERTHROW DIORI BUT SUCCESS OF OPERATION COULD NOT BE FULLY ASSURED UNTIL MAJOR SANI IN AGREEMENT. WHETHER SANI REACHED DECISION ON OWN INITIATIVE OR WAS CONVINCED BY KOUNTCHE IS NOT YET CLEAR, BUT IN ANY CASE GREEN LIGHT BY SANI PLUS HIS HEERLWN ORGANIZING OPERATIONS WERE KEY FACTORS.

3. FOREIGN MINISTER, CAPT MOUMOUNI DJERMAKOYE ADAMOU, IS NEPHEW OF U.S. UNDERSECRETARY ISSOUFOU DJERMAKOYE, BUT WAS RAISED LIKE A SON. DIPLOMATIC CORPS HAS BEEN IMPRESSED BY FOREIGN MINISTER'S QUICK ABILITY TO LEARN AS WELL AS HIS INNATE COURTESY.

4. COL. DUPUIS' INCLUSION IN CABINET WAS SURPRISE TO MANY SINCE HE NOT ONLY DID NOT PARTICIPATE IN COUP BUT HAD BEEN CLOSE MILITARY ADVISOR OF PRESIDENT DIORI AND ALLEGEDLY WAS RESPONSIBLE IN PAST FOR SUPPLYING DIORI WITH INTELLIGENCE INFORMATION ON ARMY OFFICERS WHICH RESULTED IN SOME ARRESTS, REPRIMANDS AND HARDSHIP ASSIGNMENTS. SINCE EDUCATIONS ONE OF MOST EXPLOSIVE ISSUES NEW GOVERNMENT MUST FACE, SADDLING
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PAGE 03 NIAMEY 01225 231818Z

COL. DUPUIS WITH THANKLESS AND NEAR IMPOSSIBLE TASK OR FORTFOLIO NATIONAL EDUCATIONS AND YOUTH COULD BE CLEVER MOVE BY SMC SINCE HE CAN BE MADE SCAPEGOAT OR DROPPED IF NECESSARY.

5. CAPT BAYERE MOUSSA IS BY FAR THE MOST EDUCATED OF THE CABINET HAVING SPENT A YEAR AT THE UNIVERSITY OF DAKAR BEFORE ATTENDING ST. CYR AND LATER HIGHER

TECHNICAL SCHOOLS AT VERSAILLES AND MUNICH.

6. MINISTER OF INFORMATION, LT. GABRIEL CYRILLE, IS YOUNGEST AND LOWEST RANKING MEMBER OF CABINET. HE IS SAID TO HAVE COMMANDED PLATOON WHICH SPEARHEADED ATTACK ON PALACE. LT. CYRILLE'S FATHER WAS FRENCHMAN AND ACCORDING TO SEVERAL FRENCH SOURCES IS ONLY MEMBER OF CABINET WHO HAS BEEN KNOWN TO EXPRESS STRONG ANTI-FRENCH VIEWS.

7. CAPT. ALI SAIBOU WHO IS CURRENTLY IN CHARGE OF RURAL ECONOMY AND RELIEF AID, HAD BEEN PREVIOUSLY INVOLVED IN RURAL DEVELOPMENT AND RELIEF OPERATIONS IN AGADEZ AREA WHERE HE WAS UNIT COMMANDER BEFORE COUP. HE HAS REPUTATION A MAN OF ACTION AND GOOD ORGANIZER.
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